



# Textile Research Centre Newsletter June 2015

Just a quick reminder that the TRC shuts for its annual summer holiday, from the 3rd July until the 2nd August, opening again on Monday, 3rd August. In the meantime there are various interesting items of news and developments that we thought you may find interesting

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## Wednesday Workshops

Since late last year, and every Wednesday morning at the end of each month, the TRC organises a workshop between ten in the morning until one in the afternoon. The meetings combine theory and practice, or, in other words: People will watch, listen, and do. These workshops prove to be a great success, and most of them do in fact attract more people than the maximum we can take (15).

We now have the list of the following workshops until March 2016. Please book early as from to date, since all the workshop registration lists fill up very quickly ([info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)).

- 24 June: Egyptian appliqués
- 26 August: Yemeni embroidery
- 30 September: Traditional woollen cloth from Leiden
- 28 October: Beadwork from the Street of Malakka
- 25 November: Early medieval European needlework
- 16 December: What is embroidery?
- 27 January: Threading necklaces: Professional tips
- 24 February: East European and Balkan embroidery
- 30 March: Japanese kimonos

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## Intensive Textile Courses

Because of the demand for the TRC's Intensive Textile Course it has been decided to give the course from 14-18 September and then repeat it again from 12-16 October 2015. This means that the course will have been given five times this year! Currently, there are three places left for September and one place left for October.

The course lasts five days and looks at the processes of making a piece of cloth, from the raw fibres to the end product. The participants learn about the theory and practice of fibre identification, spinning, dyeing, weaving, and decorative techniques such as printing and embroidery. The course is practically orientated and the students are encouraged to try out the wide range of techniques that are being discussed.

The group of students is always limited to eight, in order to ensure the greatest benefits to the participants. The course is given, in English, by Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, director TRC. The fee for a full week of tuition (2015) is 550 euros.

In 2016, we already planned three dates for the course, namely 21-25 March; 16-20 May, and 17-21 October. Fees: 600 euros.

For information and registration: [info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)

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## The Next Exhibition

### *Dressing Sheba* Textiles, garments and jewellery from Yemen

17<sup>th</sup> August until 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015

The image of the Queen of Sheba, dressed in exotic textiles, clothing and jewellery, dancing in front of King Solomon, has inspired the imagination of artists for hundreds of years. The Biblical land of Sheba, now reputedly known as the Republic of Yemen in the extreme southwest of the Arabian Peninsula, has long been described as the source of abundant trade goods, including emeralds and rubies, purple dyes, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and incense (*Book of Ezekiel 27:16*).

*Yemeni dagger sheath and gold embroidered belt. TRC Collection*



Dutch traders in the 17th and 18th centuries went to Yemen to acquire silk (*stickzijde*) and metal threads (*goudtraet*) and many more goods that came from as far away as Syria, Egypt, Iran, India, China and Indonesia, to bring these precious goods back to The Netherlands for the wealthy citizens of Europe. In the 20th century Yemen was still attracting trade from all over the world. Sadly, in recent months Yemen has become the scene of a bloody civil war and interference from outside.

The local geography of deserts, mountains and long coasts has meant that Yemen developed a diverse range of textile and clothing traditions that reflect local cultural and economic characteristics. This diversity is reflected in the many textiles and outfits that will be displayed in the new TRC exhibition. They include men and women's outfits from the four corners of the country, including indigo dresses with chain work, intricate embroideries of many types, locally hand woven textiles for men and women, and examples of the famous eye face veils. Also on display will be examples of the intriguing and colourful red velvet and satin bridal dresses and modern interpretations of traditional forms. Over one hundred items of Yemeni textiles, dress items and accessories are on display. Yemen has also for long been famous for its silver jewellery. Thanks to the generosity of Paul Spijker ([Toguna](#), Amersfoort), a range of silver items worn by Yemeni girls and women will also be on display.

Textile Research Centre, Hogewoerd 164, 2311 HW Leiden, The Netherlands

Tel: +31-71-5134144

M: +31-6-28830428

[info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)

[www.trc-leiden.nl](http://www.trc-leiden.nl)

The exhibition also focuses on the exquisitely embroidered dagger belts worn by men, which were produced by women of the Al Buraai family in the remote Haraz Mountains, north of the capital, Sana'a.

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## The TRC and On-Line Databases

The TRC is very busy at the moment making various parts of the TRC collection and databases available on-line. These include:

**TRC Needles:** *TRC Needles* ([click here](#)) is a digital encyclopaedia of decorative needlework and has now been on-line for just over six months. *Needles* currently includes nearly 1500 entries and more and more partners are agreeing to help with the entries and providing information and/or photographs. *Needles* ranges from the modern stitch poetry of Janet M. McDonald Davies (New Zealand) to early archaeological finds of embroidery from China.

**TRC Library:** Thanks to the hard work of the library team *TRC Library* will be on-line to the general public by the 15th August. Over 2000 titles are included in the library catalogue, with cross-references, book reviews and recommendations; the search functions enable a visitor to search for a book via author, subject, land, and so forth. The library team have worked very hard getting this all ready and the list of books in the collection will be up-dated on a regular basis. If you have books you would like to give to the TRC, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us.

**TRC Images:** We now have another group working on *TRC Images*, which is a much smaller database that will include the TRC's collection of images (postcards, photographs, even stamps) relating to textiles and costume from around the world. If you have any suitable items you are willing to donate to the TRC please let us know.

**TRC Collection:** work is progressing on bringing the TRC Collection on line, but over 10,000 objects need to be fully catalogued and photographed, and every week people bring in new items for the collection (a luxury problem indeed!). It is taking us a little longer than anticipated, but the database is going to be an amazing asset to everyone concerned.

In addition the *TRC Shop* has a wide range of books and objects relating to textiles that are for sale – everything we sell in the shop helps to fund the TRC's many activities.

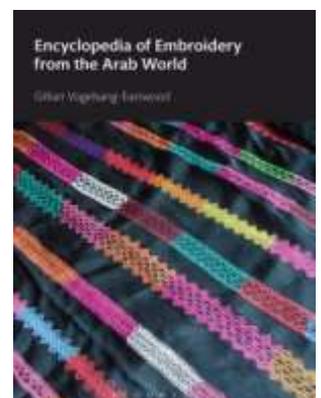
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## Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World

This vast TRC project is coming slowly to a conclusion, the manuscript and over 800 images (750 in colour) are now at the publishers, at Bloomsbury, London (the last photographs were sent on the 15<sup>th</sup> June with a great sigh of relief). With thanks to photographer Joost Kolkman (<http://www.mediabouwers.nl/>) and illustrator Martin Hense ([martinhense@hotmail.com](mailto:martinhense@hotmail.com)) for the constant support with getting the illustrations all ready. Without their help this book would not have been possible.

All being well the book will come out in the middle of February 2016. [Click here for more information.](#)

There is the distinct possibility that there will be a party at the TRC to celebrate this eventful moment!



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